



AGENDA ITEM: 2d

DISCUSSION ITEM TITLE:

**Special Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Investigative Unit and Other Related Matters**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At the September 2021 meeting of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Civilian Oversight Commission (Commission), the Commission unanimously adopted a Motion with four (4) directives to County Counsel.¹ Pursuant to the Motion, the Commission subpoenaed Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) Undersheriff Timothy Murakami to attend the Commission's October 21, 2021 meeting to provide background of the LASD's Civil Rights and Public Integrity Detail, discuss the unit's duties, and provide an update on the unit's investigations.²

BACKGROUND:

On May 27, 2021, Commissioner Sean Kennedy distributed a memorandum to the Commission that detailed LASD's pattern of publicly announcing the opening of criminal investigations of various department heads, public officials, oversight officials and other professionals who disagree with the LASD.³ At the July 15, 2021 Commission meeting, the Commission adopted a motion to subpoena Sheriff Alex Villanueva to appear at the next Commission meeting to answer questions about his conduct, as outlined in Commissioner Kennedy's memorandum.⁴

At the September 2021 Commission meeting, the Commission discussed Sheriff Villanueva's failure to appear despite being properly served a subpoena.⁵ A Motion was then adopted to have County Counsel: 1.) pursue all legal remedies for the Sheriff's defiance of the Commission's subpoena, including filing an order to Show Cause why Sheriff Alex Villanueva should not be held in contempt; 2.) determine if the actions of Sheriff Villanueva and/or the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department violated any federal, state and/or local county laws,

¹ Motion to Request that County Counsel Forward Potential Illegal Activity by the Los Angeles County Sheriff to the California Attorney General for Investigation. Retrieved from <https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/COCAmendedMotionreSheriffFailuretoAppear-9.23.2021.pdf>.

² A copy of the subpoena is attached to the October COC meeting agenda.

³ Memorandum on the Villanueva Administration's Investigations of Oversight Officials. Retrieved from https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/LASDInvestigationsofOversightOfficials_SKMemotoCOC_5.27.2021.pdf.

⁴ July 15, 2021 Commission Meeting Minutes. Retrieved from https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/commissionpublications/agenda/1112424_MeetingMinutes7-15-21final.pdf.

⁵ Subpoena to Sheriff Alex Villanueva. Retrieved from <http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/COCSubpoenatoSheriffVillanueva8.25.21.pdf>.

regulations or policies and report back the status of this review; 3.) request that the CA Attorney General exercise direct supervisory authority regarding the LASD's investigations of oversight officials; and 4.) subpoena Undersheriff Murakami to discuss the LASD's Civil Rights and Public Integrity Detail at the October Commission meeting.⁶

RECOMMENDATION/CONCLUSION:

Accordingly, if the Undersheriff appears but refuses to be sworn prior to his testimony or fails to appear, staff recommends that the Commission adopt a Motion to have County Counsel consider all legal remedies, including filing a petition for an Order to Show Cause why the Undersheriff should not be held in contempt for his defiance of the subpoena.

GUEST SPEAKERS:

- Undersheriff Timothy Murakami, LASD

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⁶ Directive number four (4) was added to the original Motion when Commissioner Bonner proposed an amendment to subpoena the undersheriff to discuss the duties of the LASD's Civil Rights and Public Integrity Detail, which he supervises.